



Houston Department of Health and Human Services

What to do if you find a bat

Bats, by consuming copious quantities of flying insects, are a very positive influence on our environment. While they are beneficial, they are one of the most common carriers of rabies. During the spring and fall migration, it is more common for citizens to see bats on the ground, hanging in shrubs around our homes and sometimes inside our homes. Simply seeing a bat does not mean it is rabid but there is a higher probability if these nocturnal creatures are seen during daylight hours.

If you find a bat, alive or dead, immediately cover it with a can or other container and call the **Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care (BARC) at 713-238-9600 to pick it up**. Do not touch the bat. Keep children and pets away from the area.

If you see a bat hanging in a shrub or other place near the ground do not touch it. Call BARC for instructions as to what to do until BARC can send an animal control officer to pick up the bat. Keep children and pets away from the area. If you find a bat in your home or office, do not attempt to catch the bat or remove it from your premises, call BARC. BARC will send an animal control officer to remove the bat from your premises. Secure the room by closing all windows and doors to prevent the bat's escape, then leave the room; keep everyone, including children and pets out of the room until the bat is removed. If the bat should come in contact with any person, please write down the name, address and telephone number of that person for the animal control officer.

Should any bat test positive for rabies, it will be necessary for BARC to contact all persons who may have come into contact with the bat to assess the risk of exposure. If it is determined a person has a high risk of exposure, it will be necessary for their physician to assess whether post exposure rabies prophylaxis is necessary. Post exposure treatment consists of the administration of rabies immune globulin in and around the site of the possible exposure, followed by a series of 5 shots spread over a three-week period. Rabies vaccine is administered in the arm for adults and hips for children.

Never ever touch a bat, call BARC AT 713-238-9600!

More information: <http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/departme/health/animalcarepage.html>